

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 NIC-01 SAJ-01 OMB-01 CU-02 AEC-05 ACDA-05

OES-03 /071 W

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P R 210916Z NOV 74

FM AMCONSUL NAHA

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

INFO SECSTATE WASH DC 1569

COMUSFT YOKOTA

USAGO FT BUCKNER

MARCORB CAMP BUTLER

COMFLEACTS OKINAWA

313TH AD KADENA

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAHA 516

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, JA

SUBJECT: THE IMPACT IN OKINAWA OF THE PRESEDENT'S VISIT TO JAPAN.

SUMMARY: THE EXTRAORDINARILY FULL AND FAVORABLE PRESS AND TV
COVERAGE IN OKINAWA OF THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT CONVEYED TO THE ISLAND
PUBLIC THE POINT THAT FOR JAPAN AS A NATION, RELATIONS WITH THE

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UNITED STATES ARE OF OVERWHELMING IMPORTANCE. LEFTIST OPPOSITION
HERE TO THE VISIT WAS CONFUSED AND MUTED. END SUMMARY

1. ON THIS ISLAND WHERE THE LEFTISTS DOMINATE BOTH POLITICS AND
THE PRESS, IT HAS BEEN REMARKABLE HOW WELL OUR PRESIDENT'S VISIT

HAS BEEN PRESENTED BY THE MEDIA AND HOW FLACCID HAVE BEEN THE LEFTIST
PROTESTS AGAINST IT. THE OKINAWAN SOCIALISTS NO MORE THAN SAID THEY
OPPOSED IT. THE COMMUNISTS PUT SOME REAL IF LIMITED EFFORT INTO
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AROUSING OPPOSITION, BUT THEIR RALLIES WERE POORLY ATTENDED, AND

OPPOSITION TO THE FORD VISIT WAS ONLY ONE OF A CATCHBAG OF SLOGANS. RADICAL STUDENTS DID NOTHING. IN PART THIS LACK OF FERVOR CAN BE

EXPLAINED BY THE VISIT NOT HAVING AN IMMEDIATE AND DIRECT TIE TO PAROCHIAL OKINAWAN CONCERNS. HOWEVER, AS VICE GOVERNOR ARAKAKI COMMENTED TO US, IT ALSO APPEARS TO BE A SIGN OF THE TIMES-- THE FERVOR SHOWN HERE BEFORE REVERSION AND ON THE MAINLAND IN SUCH AS THE TOKYO UNIVERSITY RIOTS IS A PHENOMENON THAT HAS PASSED FOR NOW.

2. THE SUPERB NHK TELEVISION COVERAGE, PARTICULARLY OF THE IMPERIAL BANQUET, UNDOUBTEDLY HAD STRONG IMPACT HERE; MOST OF THE OKINAWAN LEADERS WE HAVE TALKED TO WATCHED IT. RECONGNIZING ITS

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IMPORTANCE TO THEIR COUNTRY, THE TWO LOCAL NEWSPAPERS REPORTED THE VISIT FULLY AND REMARKABLY STRAIGHTFORWARDLY, DESPITE THEIR LEFTIST, ANTI-AMERICAN SLANT. ON NOV 20 FOR INSTANCE, BOTH NEWSPAPERS PRINTED THE FULL TEXT OF THE COMMUNIQUE. THE CRITICAL COMMENT OF LEFTIST POLITICIANS WAS CARRIED BUT NOT AS LEAD STORIES.

AT THE CLOSE OF THE PRESIDENT'S STAY IN TOKYO, THE PRESS DID HOME IN ON THE LACK OF A CLEARCUT STATEMENT FROM US ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS, BUT THE ISSUE BY NO MEANS DOMINATED LOCAL COVERAGE.

3. IN OKINAWA ALSO CLEARLY A MAJOR FACTOR IN THE FAVORABLE IMPRESSIONS FCOM THE VISIT WAS THE COVERAGE OF THE EMPEROR AND THE PRESIDENT TOGETHER, SHOWING, AS ONE JAPANESE NOTED, THE EMPEROR'S OBVIOUS PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE SUCCESS OF THE STATE VISIT. THE APTNESS OF THE PRESIDENT'S AND SECRETARY'S PUBLIC REMARKS AND THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE VISIT WERE OF COUTSE SIGNIFICANT. FROM WILL BEFORE THE VISIT IT WAS ALSO CLEAR INNATE COURTESY TO VISITORS AND APPRECIATION OF THE VALUE OF CONSULTATIONS AMONG WORLD LEADERS WERE UNDERCUTTING LEFTIST EFFORTS TO AROUSE OPPOSITION.

4. THE GENERAL BENEFIT IN JAPAN FROM THE VISIT IN REINFORCING

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GOOD WILL AND CONCERT IN JAPAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS WILL BE CONFIDENTIAL

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SHARED BY THIS PREFECTURE. THERE ARE TWO RESULTS EMERGING FROM THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT WHICH BEAR ON OUR VITAL SECURITY INTERESTS IN OKINAWA. FIRST, THE HANDLING OF THE VISIT WAS INSTRUCTIVE TO LOCAL POLITICAL LEADERS ON THE EXTREME IMPORTANCE ATTACHED BY THE GOJ TO GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. IT WILL HELP BRING HOME TO THEM THE FACT THAT THEIR PAROCHIAL COMPLAINTS ARE CONSIDERED BY GOJ IN LIGHT OF THE LARGER NATIONAL STAKE IN RELATIONS WITH THE US. SECONDLY, NOW IS A TIME WHEN OKINAWANS

ARE APPALLED ABOUT INFLATION AND DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER THEIR OWN
POST EXPO 75 ECONOMIC FUTURE (LEADING THUS TO AN EROSION OF SIMPLISTIC

ANTI-AMERICAN MILITARY ATTITUDES AND CATEGORICAL DEMANDS FOR
REMOVAL OF OUR BASES). THE SECRETARY'S EMPHASIS DURING THE VISIT
ON THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON ENERGY AND OTHER
ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, WHICH WERE ALSO GIVEN GOOD COVERAGE HERE, SHOULD
REGISTER WITH AT LEAST SOME THINKING OKINAWANS AS THEY LOOK
AHEAD TO COPING WITH VITAL WEAKNESSES IN OKINAWA'S ECONOMY.
WHILE OVERALL THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT WAS A STIMULUS FOR JAPANESE
TO TAKE A WIDER LOOK AT THEIR NATIONAL INTEREST, IT WAS

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PARTICULARLY THUS FOR THE OKINAWANS WHO HAVE TRADITIONALLY
UNDER LEFTIST PROMPTING TAKEN THE MOST NARROW AND SLANTED VIEW
OF THE VALUE OF THE AMERICAN TIES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CollinP0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974NAHA00516
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740337-0213
From: NAHA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741124/aaaaauar.tel
Line Count: 135
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 MAY 2002 by garlanwa>; APPROVED <21 MAR 2003 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE IMPACT IN OKINAWA OF THE PRESEDENT'S VISIT TO JAPAN. SUMMARY: THE EXTRAORDINARILY FULL AND FAVORABLE PRESS AND TV
TAGS: PINS, JA, (FORD, GERALD R)
To: TOKYO
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005